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FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5480  
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUCHAREST 001673

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EUR/FO FOR DAS VOLKER AND DAS PEKALA  
EUR/NCE JENSEN AND EUR/RPM LAURENDEAU

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/31/2016  
TAGS: [KCFE](#) [MARR](#) [NATO](#) [PREL](#) [RO](#)  
SUBJECT: ATHENS TEPID TO ROMANIA'S CFE FLANK DEMARCHE

REF: A. ATHENS 2868

- 1B. BUCHAREST 1637
- 1C. BUCHAREST 1576
- 1D. USNATO 569
- 1E. STATE 110161

Classified By: Political Counselor Ted Tanoue; Reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

11. (C) MFA Non-proliferation and Arms Control Director Bogdan Neculeascu on October 31 briefed Polmiloff on the results of Romania's demarche to Athens regarding possible CFE Flank ACV Entitlement transfers (refs a and b). He described the exchange between Romania's Ambassador in Athens and Greece's Director for NATO affairs as "cordial, open and frank." The Greeks reportedly argued that CFE Flank TLE is about regional balance of forces ("security equilibrium" was the term used), which includes the Aegean as well as the Black Sea. Second, ACVs are higher-value equipment because they are multi-functional across the security spectrum, from Afghanistan to Kosovo (and Neculeascu added, of course Cyprus). Third, Athens plans to purchase ACVs in 2007, and needs sufficient entitlements for that reason. Athens reportedly suggested Romania consider that Norway, Turkey and Greece should share the burden evenly in all three respective TLE categories (artillery, tanks and ACVs). In closing, the Greek side reportedly thanked the Romanian Ambassador for the meeting and suggested that Romania demarche Ankara.

12. (C) Neculeascu said that the GOR was increasingly disturbed by an apparently growing benign neglect of CFE, including within the HLTF. He said that Romania's position is that it is essential to retain CFE--whether in an adapted form or not-- since without some form of CFE (and Open Skies arrangements) the region risks chaos. He added that the MFA has been reviewing HLTF reports and it appeared that only Romania and the US among the Allies are serious about retaining a healthy CFE regime. He said that Romania is feeling increasingly isolated among the EU in its position. He noted recent attempts by Belgian OSCE Ambassador deQCrombrugghe to "walk back" on Istanbul Summit commitments, adding that some other NATO Allies seem to be leaning in this same direction.

13. (C) Polmiloff assured Neculeascu that the US could not envision a Riga ministerial statement without mention of CFE and the Istanbul Commitments. Neculeascu said that was reassuring because Romania was even sensing some hesitation from the U.S. in Vienna and Brussels on CFE.

14. (C) Neculeascu said that Romania wants to know what the U.S. strategy is on CFE issues on the road to Riga. He added that Romania was willing to assist the US on CFE issues as much as possible. He also reiterated strong support for the US-proposed public affairs strategy in response to Russian claims on the CFE treaty, but he cautioned that this was not enough. He added that Russia's growing vociferousness on CFE, in general and on the Flank in particular, could easily spin out of control within the context of the frozen conflicts. NATO needs more coordination, collaboration and a more comprehensive response that protects the integrity of the CFE treaty. If the US has any strategy papers to share with Romania, Neculeascu said, it would be very much appreciated. In closing, he reiterated that Romania is available and eager to work closely with the U.S. on these issues.

15. (C) Comment: The MFA believes it took its best shot with Athens on the CFE Flank entitlement issue, and will be gratified to hear that Athens has relented on this issue (ref A). Romania also recognizes that the US is its best hope for getting the Alliance to be more serious about Black Sea Security issues, and thus its appeal to work more closely to help shape a more comprehensive NATO strategy that takes regional concerns into account. The bottom line is that Romania is increasingly concerned that the EU-Turkey-Cyprus stalemate (Neculeascu mentioned the upcoming Finnish-Turkish meeting) might encourage some NATO Allies to concede Black Sea security issues to Russia and Turkey by default--a very

discomforting prospect for Romania. End Comment.  
Taubman